"augmenting availability of infrasturctural inputs, introduction of improved methods of maintenance, modernisation, etc."

जोगी जी ने जो सवाल पूछा था उसका मंत्री जी ने जवाब यह दिया कि हम उसको देखेंगे और जायजा लेंगे वह तो जवाब आ गया लेकिन सवाल यह है कि जो आपने अब तक कार्यवाही की है माडर्नाइजेशन के सिलसिले में मेंटेनेंस की नयी तकनीक लगाने के सिलसिले में और इनफास्ट्रक्चर इनपुटस की अवेलेबिलिटी बढ़ाने में तो उसके क्या आंकड़े हैं। आप पिछले तीन वर्ष के नहीं तो कम से कम पिछले एक वर्ष के आंकड़े आप बता दीजिये कि आपने पब्लिक सेक्टर में जो फैक्टरीज लगाई हुई हैं उनको इम्प्रूव करने के लिए उनको प्राइवेट सेक्टर के बराबर लाने के लिए क्या किया है ?

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO : Sir, the question is about Madhya Pradesh.

MR. CHAIRMAN : His question is about Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir the Cement Corporation has taken steps for improving the performance of all these three factories in Madhya Pradesh. Time-bound preventive maintenance has been planned and is being implemented. Unit management has been re-organised and strengthened. Sir, an action plan has also been prepared. As my senior colleague has just now mentioned, the performance of these three units has improved a lot between April and July.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, I have to ask...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You come to my Chamber. I have ruled that it is out. It is not a supplementary arising out of this question. I have said it with all the responsibility.

Price control on Vitamins

*283. CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK :
DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 137 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th April 1989 and state :

(a) whether Vitamin-A has now been price controlled and if so, what steps have been taken to fix its price ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this Ministry has left out Vitamins outside the purview of price control and singled out only Vitamin A ; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to bring all bulk Vitamins under price control?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Vitamin-A has been brought under price control since 18th November, 1988. As per the provisions of DPCO, 1987, the prices of bulk drug/formulations prevailing on 18-11-1988 stand frozen. However, the ceiling prices of formulations under DPCO, 1987 are under Notification. The bulk drug price will be notified after receipt of recommendation from the BICP based on their fresh cost-cum-technical study.

(b) Vitamin-A and Vitamin-C have been brought under price control.

(c) No such step is contemplated.

CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK: Sir, the Government has given a very evasive reply. The Kelkar Committee recommended price control of all major bulk vitamin drugs such as Vitamin A, Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B6 Vitamin C, Vitamin B12, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, etc. in the original report submitted in August 1987, as none of these drugs fulfilled the exclusion criteria as laid down by the Committee. Unfortunately, the Department of Chemicals kept all these bulk vitamins outside price control under the pressure and influence of drug companies ignoring the interest of poor people of the country for whose interest price control is made. In reply to Unstarred Question No. 1985, the reason given is that as the Committee recommended the combinations of Vitamins under price control, hence keeping this in view all the bulk vitamins have been price decontrolled. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that when expert committee has recommended all these bulk vitamins, as to how his Department has price decontrolled when these drugs do not fulfil any exclusion criteria. This is a monopoly production and the turnover of each drug is in crores. The formulators have high concentration of market share. What are the reasons for partiality, discrimination and arbitrariness as in all fairness, as stated all these bulk vitamins should be under price control?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO-CHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. NAMGYAL) : Sir, the allegation of the honourable Member is that it is a sort of discrimination against a certain section ; it is not so. On the basis of the recommendation of the Kelkar Committee, all vitamins as bulk drugs are decontrolled whereas the vitamin formulations remain under price control. A majority of bulk vitamins like B1, B2, B6 and folic acid is produced by the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. which is a Government of India Undertaking, a public sector undertaking. Vitamin A is produced indigenously by three companies, namely, M/s Kerala State Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited, M/s Roche Products Ltd., and M/s Glindia. Since Vitamin A is an important anti-blindness drug used in the programmes of the Health Ministry and vitamin C is consumed in large quantities, either individually or in combination with other drugs, it was decided to bring back both vitamin A and Vitamin C under price control. Accordingly, these drugs were included in the price control list on 11th November 1988.

CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK ; Sir, the Kelkar Committee, in its supplementary report submitted in October 1988, has stated that it recommended major vitamins to be kept under Price control under Category II. But the Government have kept the bulk vitamins outside the Drug prices Control Order of 1987. The Committee feels that the price decontrol of bulk vitamins may be maintained and the producers should be given a chance for growth and close monitoring should be there so that, whenever necessary, these bulk vitamins could be brought under price control. I would like to know from the honourable Minister what examination has been done by his bureaucrats of such deliberations and suggestions when the Committee is violating its own laid-down criteria and principles. Such arbitrary and partial recommendations can be challenged in any court of law and such anti-consumer actions can also be challenged under the Consumer Protection Act. So ,I would like to know what the special circumstances are under which such an anti-public action has been taken.

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Sir, as I have already submitted with regard to the prices of the other vitamins, you know, a majority of

these vitamins is produced in the public sector, by the IDPL, which is a Government of India Undertaking and we keep price control over it. It is under the control of the Ministry and there is no question of any sort of exploitation as the honorable Member fears.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes, Dr. Mahishi.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, the Minister says that the prices have been under control. Are the prices under control? The prices have not come under control. In 1988, vitamin A and vitamin C were brought under control. But the prices have not been fixed as yet and I do not know why it has taken one year.

Sir, I would like to ask another question. When the original report was given by the Kelkar Committee, it was meant to identify the drugs which should be under price control in the interest of the consumers. They gave the first report and in that they had mentioned that almost all the vitamins, vitamins A, B1, B2, B6, B12, C, D and E, all bulk drugs should be under control. But they said later on in the supplementary report which was given in October 1988, "However, the Department has not been able to keep them under control." They have not used the word "fortunately" or "unfortunately". They have simply said, "However, the Department has not kept them under control." and they have decontrolled the bulk drugs. If the bulk drugs are decontrolled, how can they be controlled under combination? If an ingredient is not under control how can the finisned product be brought under control? Is there any logic in the answer given by the Minister? Of course, I appreciate the very dynamism of the honourable Minister and the very effective reply that he has been able to give and I am extremely pleased, Sir. But in spite of that the consumers are victimised. If the ingredient is not brought under control, how can the finished product be brought under control? If the bulk drug is not brought under control, how will the combination be brought under control? The IDPL, which is a Government owned, public sector factory, has been producting B1, B2 and all these things. Sir, I am giving you an example. After decontrol, the import of B1, B2, B6 and all these things, has increased tremendously even by IDPL. IDPL which was importing at Rs. 962 per kg. is selling the same at Rs. 1167 per kg. making money out of this. Is IDPL meant for making money by selling imported drugs? Is there a monitoring system in the country, for use of these drugs how much drug is consumed by the people? Essential drugs, Vit. A, Vit. C, were also out of control. They were brought under control in 1988, November. He has answered the question on the floor of the House in November 1988. Now, the Bureau of industrial Costs and Production have taken more than a year to bring the price under control, fix the price. Is that the way of doing things, Sir? I do appreciate the effectiveness of the Government and the Ministry very much and the dynamic interest the Minister has been taking in the same. But in spite of all these things, the consumer is being victimised. The sale of these drugs goes to more than Rs. 15 crores. The turnover is not a small thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your question?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : The Department may not be briefing him properly. You don't allow our Members also to brief the Minister properly. Sir, What are we here for? (*Interruptions*)

If the Secretariat is not able to brief the Minister properly, how can the Minister understand? Therefore, the main thing is, if we are allowed to speak, it is our problem. But the consumer is being victimised.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is not meant for briefing. Put your question. (*Interruptions*).

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, before control, the price of Vit. A dry powder was something like Rs. 1100...

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your question, please?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : After control, that has become Rs. 2100 and...

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is not a briefing...(*Interruptions*)

AN HON. MEMBER : Ministers are badly in need of briefing.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, I seek protection from the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I seek protection from you. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Sir, she wants them to share our knowledge because we share their ignorance every day. (*Interruptions*)

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, are we expected to accept any answer that is given by a Minister?

MR. CHAIRMAN : You put the question, first.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : In spite of the fact that Vit. A and Vit. C were brought under control in 1988 why has the price not been fixed? He will answer that the Bureau of Industrial Production and Costs have not...

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you know that, then put another question.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : I am putting, I am putting another question. If it is the case of increasing the price of any drug the Ministry will take immediate steps. But if it is the case of reducing the price of a particular drug and bringing it under price control they will take so much time. Let him answer whether after decontrolling essential drugs, basic drugs, the import has increased or decreased. The IDPL has increased import and is selling the drug... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Sir, as far as the decontrol of bulk drugs, Vit. A, under DPCO, 1987 is concerned, the manufacturers revised the price by themselves. However, as the revised prices were substantially higher and found unreasonable, the Government intervened and prevailed upon the manufacturers for reducing the price. The manufacturers agreed to the same and reduced the price to a reasonable level.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : What is the reasonable level? To what extent have they reduced?

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Under DPCO, 1987, in respect of Vit. A acetate that was Rs. 1297.86. Immediately after decontrolling it was Rs. 2400. Subsequently, after Government's intervention, they reduced the price. The present price is Rs. 2100/-. That is the level.

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY: After decontrol the prices of all the bulk drug have been increased abonormally. After increasing the prices abnormally, they have reduced them somewhat. It is no reduction at all.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO : Sir, this question is about vitamins. We are awaiting the report of the BICP. After receiving the report, we will certainly see that prices are further modified. If necessary, we will control the prices.
(*Interruptions*)

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, are you satisfied with the answer?

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has given the answer.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Sir, you are monitoring the questions? Why can't you monitor the answer?

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY : Sir she has raised many issues. She has asked many questions. He has not replied to those questions at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He will see that the prices are reduced.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY : Sir are you satisfied with his reply? Or you have no option at all. You are helpless then.

SHRI A.G. KULKARNI : He has said that the prices will be kept under control.

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Sir, the BIPC has undertaken a fresh cost-cum-technical study of the bulk drug vitamin A and the prices of this drug can be modified only after receipt and examination of the recommendation of the BICP in this regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN : When will you do it? That is the question. The House wants to know it. When are you going o reduce the prices?

श्री बसंत साठे : दवा का सवाल है। मर्ज बढ़ता गया, ज्यों-ज्यों दवा की।

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO; Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Member, Dr, Sarojini Mahishi. She is praising the Ministers saying that they are dynamic. She is blaming the bureaucracy. Sir, we will bring these drugs under price control immediately after the receipt of the BICP report.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI: How does the Minister interpret and extract this meaning out of my sentences that I am praising the Minister and criticising the bureaucracy?

SHRI P. N, SUKUL; In reply to Unstarred Question No 3272 answered on 22nd August, 1988, the Minister had himself admitted that the price of all bulk vitamins had gone up from 50 per cent to 100 per cent, According to the statement furnished by the Minister at that time the price of Vitamin A palmatate went up from Rs. 990/-to Rs. 1300/- after price decontrol. Similarly. the price of Vitamin A dry went up from Rs. 1297/-to Rs. 2100/-. The price of Vitamin B1 rose from Rs, 950/- to Rs. 1132/. Thus, it is clear that the consumers interest is not being safeguarded by the Government any more, The objective laid down for price control was to protect the interest of the consumers. But with such high increase, how can the interest of consumers be safeguarded? I don't know whose interest the Minister and the Government are safeguarding, I would like to know what the Government is doing to safeguard the interest of poor consumers in this country.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Sir, we are as much interested in safeguarding the interest of the poor people as the hon. Member is. Vitamin A was not under control. Vitamin A is useful for the blind people. Now we have controlled Vitamins A and C. The remaining will be controlled after the receipt of BICP report,

SHRI G, SWAMINATHAN: Sir, there are two sides of the question. One point that has been raised was that if the raw material is not control led, how can the forumlation be controlled. The same question may be asked that the raw material in any vitamin has got so many inputs. Every vitamin may have about 40 to 100 inputs inside, and every input's price is going up. Unless you control the inputs that go into the bulk vitamin, there is no point in saying that the bulk vitamin price will be controlled. And unless the bulk vitamin price is controlled, the formula-

tion cannot be controlled. The control has to start from the beginning of the input. In India, Sir, because of the inflationary conditions, the price of every input is going up. For instance, Sir, if you take sugar which goes into the formulation, it has gone up by about 25 to 30 per cent unless you start off, whether it is medicine or non-medicine, with whichever has been added to the bulk vitamin, it is not possible to control this thing. Is the Government also aware that because of the control that has been done for a long number of years, many public sector undertakings, including the IDPL have almost lost more than their capital? And if the control is going to exist what will happen to the industry? Sir, most of the pharmaceutical industries, as the Government most probably may be aware of, were running through very bad days for a number of years. Most of the industries were almost on their death-bed. And because some concessions had been given, the industry is able to survive and compete. Sir, by controlling, is the consumers' interest being really served or by non-controlling the consumers' interest will be served, by the industry coming up and more competition coming So, Sir, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will also consider the other side of the picture that the industry should also survive so that the consumers may be able to get the medicines. Sir, some years back, people were not able to get vital medicines in the country,

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Sir, the hon. Member is asking on behalf of the producers. Sir...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, I would like to say that decontrol is not on behalf of the producers....

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is talking on behalf of the people.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: By open competition, you are again increasing the consumerism. Control has always been beneficial only to the producer and not to the consumers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not reflect on the Member. He is speaking on behalf of the people.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Sir, the hon. Member here mentioned about the difficulties of the manufacturers also. That is why, Sir, we referred it to the BICP about the cost of inputs and production. And we are awaiting the report (*Interruptions*)

AN HON. MEMBER: On whose side is the Government?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajni Ranjan Sahu.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Sir, I want to put a simple question.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Even in Russia, they are decontrolling. Even the Communist countries, the socialist countries want open competition. With all the control, the country is going back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't get excited. I said that you are speaking on behalf of the people of India.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: I am talking on behalf of the public...

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has stated that the bulk drug price will be notified after the receipt of the recommendations of the BICP based on their fresh cost-cum-technical study. Now Sir, a new misleading terminology has been introduced-- a fresh cost-cum-technical study. And as the other hon. Members also mentioned, the prices are increasing by 50 to 100 per cent. Can the hon. Minister give a dateline to the BICP to submit their recommendations so that the consumers may be saved from paying higher prices? Secondly if there is no price fixation now, how are the prices being regulated now ?

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Sir, as suggested by the hon. Member, certainly we will ask the BICP to submit their report immediately. And we will take action on that.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : At present, how is the price being regulated? There is no price control or decontrol...

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: As my colleague has mentioned, some of the vitamins are manufactured only by our public sector undertakings There also, we will control those prices also.

Dr. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Mr. Chairman Sir, Vitamins are very essential and there are vitamin-deficiency diseases also. And the poor people are prone to these vitamin-deficiency diseases and we are not able to give them proteins, we are not able to give them a balanced diet. Under the circumstances, the supply of vitamins is very essential for maintaining the health of the common people.

We appreciate what the Minister has said about vitamin A deficiences and how it is useful. Not only vitamin A, Sir, but all vitamins are essential. In the circumstances, what action the hon. Minister will take to see that all vitamins are supplied to the people at a very very cheap price, because they are essential and without that our citizens cannot have good health.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Dr. Reddy is a medical doctor, not the other doctor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is a medical doctor.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Yes, when I was the Chief Minister he was the D. M. O. of Karimnagar District

MR. CHAIRMAN: He says, he is an efficient doctor.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: Sir I entirely agree with his arguments. That is why I said we are interested in the consumer and not the industrialists. That is why we are awaiting the report of the BICP after which we will take action.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA: They are all praising the Minister since none of them is a doctor.

श्री तीरथ राम आमला : जनाब चेयरमैन साहब, मैं आपके जरिए मिनिस्टर साहब से यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि जहां प्राइस कंट्रोल का जिक्र हो रहा है और वह जोर-शोर से प्राइस कंट्रोल कर रहे हैं, क्या क्वालिटी कंट्रोल के मुतल्लिक भी इनका कोई ध्यान है ? ऐसा तो नहीं है कि प्राइस तो कम कर दी मगर उस कैप्सूल की या गोली की जो क्वालिटी है वह आधी रह गई ? क्या कोई आर्गनाइजेशन या एजेंसी ऐसी है जो इस क्वालिटी को कंट्रोल करती है ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants to know about the quantity and quality control.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO: We are giving top priority on quality. First of all they must get a certificate from the Drugs Controller and only then we will fix the prices.

Hike in power Tariffs in Punjab

*284. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently, a steep hike has been effected in the power tariffs in Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what process was adopted for fixing new tariffs and whether any consultations were held with the representatives of Commerce and Industry of the State in this regard?